



June 17, 2013

Ex Parte filing

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
445 12th Street, S.W.
Room TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services, WC Docket No. 12-375

Dear Ms. Dortch,

On June 13, 2013, members of the American Jail Association (AJA) met with the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau to discuss WC 12-375 and its potential impact on America's jails. Given the fundamental differences between prisons and jails, AJA seeks to engage FCC staff regarding WC Docket No. 12-375 and provide relevant data to show the need to reexamine the rule and consider its applicability to our Nation's jails.

Randy Clarke, FCC Pricing Policy Division staff, worked with AJA staff to secure the meeting time and location and arrange AJA's participation. AJA's Executive Director, Robert Kasabian, along with AJA member Mitch Lucas and DC Representative Nile Elam, discussed the rule's potential impact, operational and budgetary differences between jails and prisons, and the maintenance of phones within jails. Within the FCC, the following staff were present: Lynne Engledow, John Hunter, David Zesiger, Lane Johnson, Greg Haledjian, Mellisa Kirkel, Rhonda Lien, Kalpak Gude, and Anjali Vohra.

Mitch Lucas discussed his jail's inmate phone operations for their facility in Charleston, South Carolina, including the phone's key role incentivizing model behavior and increasing safety among inmates and correctional officers. Mr. Lucas explained that these phone calls allow inmates to reach out to family, friends, and their attorneys and that this connection is vital for inmate management, the safety of the facility, and inmate transition once freed into the community. He concluded that no jail wants to see disproportionately high rates, and that the goal is always to find a reasonable rate that both parties agree to. He emphasized his that that insufficiently low rates will deter many phone companies from pursuing jail contracts, thus leaving the jail without any such service for its population. Mr. Lucas noted that while there is no legal obligation in any state to provide inmate phone service, jails strive to provide this service to maintain a safe environment for both inmates and staff.



Robert Kasabian addressed AJA's concerns in the main, discussing the uniqueness and complexity of phone contracts in individual facilities. Among other points, Robert pointed out that each jail operates its own budget, large and small, and that the revenues generated from these contracts are utilized in each jail for different purposes, including for inmate welfare programs and activities. Mr. Kasabian observed that it is difficult to determine a "flat rate" for inmate calls since each jail's budget is different, along with a jail's annual population, and the programs offered vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Mr. Kasabian detailed the major differences between prisons and jails, the fiscal challenges jails face each year in comparison to prisons, and differences in populations between the two facilities.

FCC Pricing Policy Division staff asked an array of questions regarding the average amounts AJA members charge inmates, the types of contracts AJA members sign with phone providers, and operational trends AJA members see regarding their phone operations.

AJA appreciates the FCC's willingness to engage in discussion on this issue. AJA pledges to help provide the Commission all relevant data regarding jail phone operations. As this process develops, the AJA appreciates the FCC's close consideration of AJA-member issues, and the potential far-reaching impact this rule will have on America's jails.

This *Ex Parte* notice is being filed as required by FCC rules.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nile Elam", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nile Elam